



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/975,615	10/10/2001	Lisa A. Vala	5511USA	8746
30173	7590	04/07/2004	EXAMINER	
GENERAL MILLS, INC. P.O. BOX 1113 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55440			SHARAREH, SHAHNAM J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1617	

DATE MAILED: 04/07/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 09/975,615	<b>Applicant(s)</b> VALA ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> Shahnam Sharareh	<b>Art Unit</b> 1617	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
  - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
  - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
  - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 January 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5, 7, 10, 15-17 and 20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5, 7, 10, 15-17, 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

### **DETAILED ACTION**

Amendment filed on January 07, 2004 has been entered. Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 10, 15-17, 20 are pending. Any rejection that is not addressed in this Office Action is considered obviated in view of the Amendment.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 1,3, 5, 15, 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sjoberg US Patent 6,491,952.

Applicant's arguments with respect to this rejection are fully considered but are not found persuasive.

Applicant argues that there is no teaching anywhere in Sjoberg of a cholesterol lowering compositions achieved by combining an oat component with a  $\beta$ - sitosterol or  $\beta$ - sitostanol. In response, Examiner states that the instant claims are directed to compositions of matter not methodology of achieving a cholesterol lowering effect.

In claims drawn towards compositions of matter, a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim. Since Sjoberg provides for the components of the instant compositions and there is no structural difference between the compositions of Sjoberg and the instant compositions, Sjoberg anticipates all functional limitations of the instant claims

Additionally, Sjoberg's composition inherently anticipates all limitations of the instant compositions. Sjoberg discloses cholesterol lowering baked cakes of 18-20 grams each containing 0.5 g of sitosterol or sitostanol and oat flakes (see example 9, claims 1-9). Thus, the claimed functional property is inherently met because Sjoberg teaches the combination of both sitosterol or sitostanol and oat flakes. Accordingly, the rejection is deemed proper and is hereby maintained.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 10, 15-17, 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sjoberg US Patent 6,491,952 in view of James US Patent 6,020,324.

Applicant's arguments with respect to this rejection have been fully considered but are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's argument that neither references recognized the healthful benefits of lowering cholesterol and/or LDL levels, Examiner states the fact that applicant has recognized another advantage which would flow naturally from following the suggestion of the prior art cannot be the basis for patentability when the differences would otherwise be obvious. See *Ex parte Obiaya*, 227 USPQ 58, 60 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1985).

Here, the central question is whether one of ordinary skill in the art would have combined the teachings of Sjoberg and James to arrive at the instantly claimed composition for any recognized benefit which would flow naturally from the suggestions

Art Unit: 1617

of prior art. Since combining two compositions each of which is taught by prior art to be useful for same purpose has been held *prima facie* obvious, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to combine the mixture of Sjoberg with those of James.

Moreover, contrary to Applicant's arguments, James specifically shows that  $\beta$ -glucan containing food supplements are readily used to lower cholesterol including LDL (abstract, col 3, lines 12-35, col 6, lines 65-67; col 7, lines 1-50). Therefore, Applicant's main argument on the lack of beneficial use at least on the teachings of James seems to be factually incorrect.

### ***Conclusion***

No claims are allowed. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shahnam Sharareh whose telephone number is 571-272-0630. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 am - 6:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sreenivasan Padmanabhan, PhD can be reached on 571-272-0629. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

SS

  
**RUSSELL TRAVERS**  
**PRIMARY EXAMINER**